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Now the difference of the distances of the sun on these two days is not very great, in comparison of the whole distance from the sun; and hence, though the earth is nearer to the sun in winter than in summer, its heat is to us the greatest in the latter season. You may, any morning at breakfast make this clear to your imagination, whilst you are holding a piece of bread to toast by the fire. If it is held upright before the fire, it will soonest be toasted; and, as you incline towards you, the part nearest to the fire will be burnt, when that nearest to you is scarcely heated. According to the degrees of inclination the effects will be different, and these degrees of inclination may show you the effects of the rays of the sun on different regions of the earth.

When the toast is held upright, the heat of the fire strikes it in the strongest manner: and so does the heat of the sun strike those parts of the earth, where it is directly over the heads of the inhabitants. When the toast is inclined, then it receives the heat of the fire in the same manner as the other regions of the earth do the heat of the sun at noon. In summer time the earth is farthest from the sun; but the inclination of the rays of the sun on our country, is represented by the action of the fire on toast, held nearly in an upright state. In winter the earth is nearer; but then the rays of the sun strike our country, as the fire does the toast, when it is held in a posture very much inclined. They who live in the southern part of the earth, have, during our winter, the sun nearer them, and also its rays striking them more forcibly; and in summer they are not

only farther removed from the sun, but also his rays strike them in a less forcible manner. Hence their summer ought to be hotter, and their winter colder, than ours; but so many other causes interfere in the production of heat and cold, that this difference affecting the power of the sun's rays is of little consequence.

For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

RAMBLE OF AN INQUISITIVE TRAVELLER.

(Continued from Vol. XII. page 279.)

“THE utmost harmony now prevailed, and the serjeant having ordered in a bowl of punch, we drank his majesty's health again, and again; the glass passing briskly I assure you. This good cheer seemed to cement our jovial friendship, and the serjeant soon became very talkative, and recounted many heroic exploits of his younger years; he was so very affable as to permit me to wear his cap, which I esteemed a very great mark of condescension. My father shared fully in the passing mirth, and sung, or rather vociferated, several songs in praise of flowing bowls, full bumpers, sparkling glasses, and generous wine. Indeed your humble servant was tickled with his good fortune; my whole frame was, as it were, tuned to joy. I laughed often, talked much and incoherently, and at length overpowered by whiskey and jollity, sunk to rest where I was sitting.

“On awaking next morning, I was so ill that I could scarcely move; and I had began to think some of the late events rather a dream than a reality, just as the serjeant enters

sun at the appointed time is obliged to submit to the superior dominion of the night.

ed the room, I inquired of him for my father, but he informed me in a surly tone, that he had left the house soon after I fell asleep. He then muttered some words about extortion, and conscience, and ended with a great profusion of oaths, all of that kind which may be called minced, or abbreviated, yet delivered with such excellent emphasis that they really lost little of their due strength; after thus expressing his rage, he appeared more composed, and drew near to the bed where I was still lying, and sitting down, began thus:

'You witnessed last night my generous treatment of your father, and after you were put to bed, I also gave him a guinea: this honourable usage was however lost on him, he insisted to have two guineas, though the old rascal knew I could only pass you for the drum, being too low for the ranks. However my brave lad, I perceive you to be possessed of true military spirit, you disdained to higgie about bounty money, and you shall be preferred when you join our regiment; you shall at least be a serjeant, that's certain.' Overpowered by pure gratitude, I could scarcely return him due thanks for his kind offer. He retired, and I arose to breakfast, which he had ordered, and as nothing material occurred for some days, I shall like the learned school-master, 'skip and go on;' it is however proper to notice, that I saw no more of my father, and that my serjeant was one of those honourable gentlemen called crimps.

"One evening as I sat in the small room in which I was usually kept, the serjeant entered in a great flutter, followed by a brisk young officer, whose splendid appearance filled me with awe and admiration. This hero of lace and feather, after a salutation which was no way clog-

ged by formality, viewed me with much circumspection, and at his desire I gave three upright jumps, clapt my hands the same number of times above my head, and behind my back, which feats being to his satisfaction, he bade the serjeant ten guineas for me. This offer was refused, and was followed up by the serjeant making some remarks on the great scarcity of active young men. As to me he said I was an excellent recruit, possessed both of soundness and agility, and would soon fit any corps whatever. A long altercation now took place between those gentlemen, wherein was urged with great force, as to oaths, both my importance and insignificance, but the officer, who as I afterwards learned, was just wanting one to complete his quota of men, was forced to submit to the other's terms, which was eighteen guineas. I now followed my new master, without the least regret at leaving the serjeant, whom I began to see in his proper colours.

"This change however was not much for the better, being immediately put on board a vessel at the quay, in which were about twenty ragged lads like myself; the vessel sailing the same night, we landed at a small sea-port in Scotland, and reached head quarters of the regiment to which we were destined, without any thing material occurring on the way. On our route several little occurrences took place that created strong doubts in my mind as to my being a gentleman: these doubts were however timely removed by the drill serjeant's cane. Two persons who had deserted being taken and brought to the regiment, underwent such a dreadful flagellation, that at the sight I became stupified with horror, and sunk down in a state of faintish insensibility. From this state I was

soon roused by a few hearty kicks administered by the drill serjeant, in order that I might more fully witness this scene of more than brutal barbarity. The wretches fainted several times under the lash, without causing the least cessation or remission in torture.

"I have somewhere read, that we are a flogged, or flogging nation, I forget which, but in either case the observation held good as to us, for we were certainly a flogged regiment; scarcely a day passed by, without one or more such scenes as I have related, which custom had rendered so familiar as to be called by the *cant* name of discipline. Familiar as this horrid business was, I was lucky enough to escape, but each day, I may add hour, confirmed if possible, my aversion to *gentlemanism*, and I began to contrive the speediest way to get off, but I was several months before I could bring any plan to maturity that promised success, and several more elapsed without an opportunity for its execution. In the mean time my gun burst when firing during a field day, and lacerated my left hand in a dreadful manner. As the surprise and agony of this shock subsided, I really viewed it as a sure presage of good fortune, especially as the plan I had laid to get off, might have been attended with still worse consequences. For though the tendons of my hand were somewhat torn, and hence stiff, I had reason to believe I would recover its use, being able to move my fingers full as well as could be expected. This however was a secret that I determined to keep at that time, and at each dressing when ordered by the surgeon to move my fingers, I inflexibly persisted in my inability; and in short, played my part so well, that in a few months I was ordered to be discharged, and for ever

bade adieu to being a gentleman: I even yet retain rather an antipathy to the very name.

"The joy of release threw me into a kind of delicious deliriousness, from which I did not recover till I had nearly squandered the small sum of money that I received with my discharge to carry me home—though God knows I had no place deserving of that endearing name. With the pittance remaining, I determined to make the best, and being unable to work, and inclined to ramble, I bought this very basket, in which I put my small stock, and having fully 'the world before me,' commenced travelling chapman.

"At setting out, a favourite proverb of my aunt's came in my mind, namely, 'a light profit makes a heavy purse,' and to it I determined to adhere, and to ask as low a price as possible for each article, and not to take less than asked; from which system I anticipated sure gains, speedy sales, ready money, and of course, a heavy purse. This mode, however good it might be in my aunt's theory, like many other theories, lost much of its value in practice, and had nearly proved fatal to my little stock. The people had been accustomed time immemorial to hear persons in my line ask high prices for their goods, and to roundly assert their excellent quality; therefore when I simply asked the least price I could take, the articles were often rejected as being bad, from the very low value at which I offered them. The far greater part, however, when I refused to come still lower than I asked, treated me much worse; many declared, often with dreadful oaths, that they would as soon melt their money in the fire, or throw it into the sea, as buy one pin's worth from such a greedy stingy grub. Some declared that they never met with such a

taker-in; others called me a miser, Jew, swaddler, or any term of scorn and contempt they could devise at that moment, and the consequence was, that I sometimes travelled whole days without selling to the value of sixpence.

"Tired of proverbs, and formal honesty, I have ever since followed the practice of all persons of my profession, asking large prices, and taking them too when I can get them, and thus I lead a merry rambling life; my chief study the whims and caprices of the public. You smile, perhaps, at my slender means of gratifying the fantasies of mankind; I own it appears rather a riddle; however it is easily unravelled; observe those specimens. This picture, from the *Sugar-Island* press, which now bears the name of the 'Prince Regent,' once bore that of 'Frederic of Prussia,' and had long a good sale, even after the natural death of that hero. The name at length gave place to that of 'James Earl of Charlemont, General of the Irish Volunteers;' it was then prized more than ever; the sooty walls of each cottage might be said to shine with him, and celebrated 'Free Trade Paddy.' Under its present name of 'Prince Regent,' it for some time sold well, but the people now seeing the difference between 'George Prince of Wales,' and the 'Prince Regent,' have lost all relish for the picture, which now is only bought for the fine figure of the horse on which he is mounted. This hero was once called 'Sir William Howe,' but then sold very poorly; however on receiving its present name, 'Bonaparte,' it made ample amends for its former slowness of sale, for towards him the public have shown a constancy very different from that to the Regent. General, Consul, or Emperor, have been all alike; there has been no

decrease worth notice in sale, however different the actions of the person it pretends to represent; and he still continues to be the chief ornament of the country houses. The annexed imperfect sketch of his life, is often the basis of political conversation."

After some remarks on similar subjects, but much less worthy of notice than the foregoing, my narrator concluded; and after satisfying the landlord, we shook hands and departed. Leaving Ballyearry, I passed its antient church, now a ruin; it presents nothing remarkable.

(To be continued.)

For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

SPEECH DELIVERED BY WILLIAM B. NEILSON, AS PRESIDENT OF THE BELFAST HISTORIC SOCIETY, AT THE CLOSE OF THE SESSION, ENDING JUNE 1813....PRESENT, NINETEEN MEMBERS, FORTY ONE STRANGERS.

GENTLEMEN,

THE laws of the Society direct that each session shall be closed by an oration from the chair, in which the objects of the Society are to be particularly detailed, and a view taken of the progress it has made in the course of the session.

It is in the performance of that duty I now rise to address you, and aware, as I am, of my total inability to do the subject that justice it deserves; feeling as I do, that in the necessary requisites I am more than deficient, I am only encouraged to proceed by the certain conviction, that the audience I have the honour to address, will attribute my errors to my inexperience, rather than to my will. However, wanting I may be in capacity, none can feel more solicitous for the welfare of the Society, or be more sincerely devoted to its interests. Allow me